EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Setting

The Mountain View IV Wind Energy Project would be sited on public lands and Palm Springs jurisdictional lands located within the western end of the Coachella Valley, west of North Indian Canyon Drive and south of Interstate-10 in Palm Springs California. The subject properties are located within Section(s) 27 and 28, Township 3 South, Range 4 East, SBBM, as shown on the USGS 7.5' Desert Hot Springs Quadrangle.

The project site consists of vacant desert lands and a large berm in Section 27, and the remnants of a non-operational wind generation facility and associated gravel roads in Section 28. There are no established communities or residences within any portion of the project site or located immediately adjacent to the site.

Project Description

The proposed Mountain View IV project would be built on public lands in Section 28, under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) along with private land owned by Coachella Valley Water District (CVWD) in Section 27, contiguous on the eastern boundary. The subject property is located entirely within the incorporated limits of the City of Palm Springs. Both parcels would be developed as a comprehensively planned project. The BLM portion of the project would require a Right-of-Way (ROW) Grant from the BLM to allow development of between 21 and 24 wind turbine generators rated at 850 to 1,500 kW (kilowatts) each, for a total of between 20.4 and 21.0 MW (megawatt) capacity. The CVWD portion of the project is subject to a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) through the City of Palm Springs and would include between 28 and 34 wind turbines in Section 27 with up to 28.0 MW in rated capacity. The total installed capacity of the public and private land under either Option A or B would not exceed 50.0 MW.

The project will include existing 16 foot wide gravel roads totaling 17,200 linear feet, and new 16 foot wide gravel roads totaling 16,065 linear feet on-site to connect to existing adjacent roads. Each of the wind turbines will have a 63’ x 47’ gravel area, with 4” to 6” of gravel over compacted native soil. No more than 2,000 total cubic yards of cut and 2,400 total cubic yards of fill, balanced on site, will be required. An existing off-site road in Section 21 crossing private land and an existing road along the southern boundary of Section 22 provide access to the site. Other proposed facilities include extension of an existing overhead power line within BLM land in Section 22 (approximately 5,450 total linear feet) and construction of a 34.5 kV (kilovolt) to 115 kV electrical substation on BLM land just north of the Union Pacific Railroad line, all located in Section 22. A more detailed description of the proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action is contained in *Section 2.0* of this document.

Environmental Analysis

The following table, *Table ES-1,* provides a summary of impacts related to the proposed project. The table focuses on significant environmental impacts resulting from the project pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines Section 15123(b)(1).

Table ES-1
Executive Summary Matrix

Topic / Impacts	Mitigation Measures / Environmental Commitments	Level of Significance after Mitigation
3.1 Visual Resources		
No significant impacts to visual resources were identified.	No mitigation required.	Impacts are less than significant.
3.2 Biological Resources		
Development of the site could impact certain plant and animal species including Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, Coachella Valley milkvetch, flat-tail horned lizard, burrowing owl, silver cholla and desert willow hummocks.	3.2-1. The right of way holder (ROW Holder) shall designate a field contact representative (FCR) who will be responsible for overseeing compliance with protective measures for the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard (CVFTL) and the Coachella Valley milkvetch involved in compliance coordination with the BLM, and shall be authorized to halt any construction related actions that may be in violation of protective measures for threatened or endangered species. 3.2-2. Prior to initiating any surface disturbing activities, ROW Holder shall prepare and present an endangered species education program to all employees/contractors involved in any construction activities. The program will be conducted using the CVFTL and CV milkvetch program already approved by the USFWS. The program will contain, at a minimum, the following topics for the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard and Coachella Valley milkvetch,: • Distribution and occurrence • General behavior and ecology • Species sensitivity to human activities • Legal protection • Penalties for violation of State or	Potential impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

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	Federal Laws • Reporting requirements • Project protection mitigation measures. Education programs previously prepared and approved by BLM and USFWS for wind energy development projects in the area may also be used without further approval, provided the program has incorporated the required topics as noted above. 3.2-3. Locations of poles, guy anchors, and trenches, shall be chosen to avoid habitat suitable for CVFTL and CV milkvetch to the maximum extent possible utilizing the existing project design and layout. Work area boundaries shall be conspicuously staked, flagged or marked to minimize surface disturbance to surrounding habitat. 3.2-4. Poles and guy wires installed shall be completed by avoiding crushing or removing perennial vegetation to the maximum extent possible. 3.2-5. All vehicles shall be confined to existing access routes or previously disturbed areas to the maximum extent possible. 3.2-6. The ROW Holder shall hire a qualified biological monitor (as defined in the FTHL Rangewide Management Strategy) to be present during construction. The biological monitor may also function as the FCR, and shall perform the functions specified in the Flat-tailed Horned Lizard Rangewide Management Strategy (2003 Revision). 3.2-7. Not more than thirty days prior to construction activity in the area to be disturbed, the biological monitor/FCR shall survey the construction area for CV milkvetch. Any CV milkvetch plants present shall be marked with a flagged stake and protected from damage, by	

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	avoiding any surface impacts within five (5) meters of the plant to the extent possible. 3.2-8. Desert willow hummocks shall be avoided, with no disturbance to occur within five (5) meters, to the extent possible. 3.2-9. If any triple-ribbed milkvetch are found, the ROW Holder shall suspend operations in the vicinity, and notify BLM to determine whether the plants may be affected by the ROW Holder's actions. 3.2-10. The FCR/biological monitor shall maintain a record of the date, time and location of all fringe-toed lizards, milkvetch species, and FTHL found in the right of way. Any damage, injury or death to any of these species shall be recorded. 3.2-11. Within 90 days of completion of the work, the FCR shall prepare and submit (to BLM and USFWS) a brief report summarizing the project. Five color photographs will be taken by the FCR or biological monitor before, during and after construction to be included in the report. The report shall include a description of the project and compliance with the biological mitigations. 3.2-12. All trash and food items shall be properly contained and regularly removed from the Project site. 3.2-13. No pets shall be permitted on the Project site. The following two measures will apply to construction within Section 27 only as no individuals of burrowing owl were found within Sections 22 or 28. 3.2-14. A focused survey for burrowing owl shall be conducted within Section 27 prior to project construction-related ground disturbance. The survey	

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	should be conducted according to the recommended guidelines of the Burrowing Owl Consortium (1993) and in consultation with the CDFG and the USFWS. Occupied burrows should not be disturbed during the nesting season (February 1 through August 31) unless a qualified biologist approved by the CDFG verifies through noninvasive methods that either: (1) the birds have not begun egg-laying and incubation; or (2) that juveniles from the occupied burrows are foraging independently and are capable of independent survival. 3.2-15. If burrowing owls are present which could be affected by project construction, the approved biologist shall develop a program to mitigate impacts to this species either through avoidance or by passive relocation. Suggested measures for either of these methods are contained in Appendix B, Section 5.2.8 of the Section 27 Report. The program shall be developed according to the 1993 Mitigation Guidelines of the Burrowing Owl Consortium and in consultation with the CDFG and the USFWS. 3.2-16. The applicant shall consult with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), prior to project construction to determine whether a streambed alteration agreement is required by that agency for the smaller drainages located on the project site.	
3.3 Cultural Resources		
Due to the lack of any cultural material encountered during the field investigation and the low potential for any buried cultural deposits, the project is anticipated to have no impact on prehistoric or historic resources. However, mitigation has been incorporated in the event such resources are uncovered during project grading and construction.	3.3-1. If human remains are exposed during construction on non-federal land, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to the origin and disposition pursuant to Public Resources Code 5097.98. Construction must halt in the area of	Potential impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

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	the discovery of human remains, the area must be protected, and consultation and treatment shall occur as prescribed by law. If human remains are encountered on federal land, pursuant to the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and associated regulations, the responsible federal agency official must be notified by telephone immediately, and with written confirmation (43 CFR 10.4[c]). In addition, all ongoing activities must cease, the remains should be secured and protected, and Native American representatives should be consulted (43 CFR 10.4[d]).	
	3.3-2. Any buried cultural materials unearthed during earth-moving operations associated with the undertaking should be examined and evaluated by a qualified archaeologist prior to further disturbances.	
The project area was closely inspected for any evidence of paleontological remains, but none were found. No fossil vertebrate or invertebrate remains were encountered during the field survey. However, Pleistocene-age sediments may be present at depth below the surface.	3.3-3. The excavation of areas greater than fifteen (15) feet shall be monitored by a qualified paleontological monitor. Monitoring shall be restricted to any undisturbed subsurface older alluvium which might be present below the surface. The monitor shall be prepared to quickly salvage fossils as they are unearthed to avoid construction delays. The monitor shall also remove samples of sediments that are likely to contain the remains of small fossil invertebrates and vertebrates. The monitor shall have the power to temporarily halt or divert grading equipment to allow for removal of abundant or large specimens.	
	3.3-4. If specimens are found when excavation exceeds fifteen (15) feet, the following steps shall be followed: • Collected samples of sediments	

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	shall be washed to recover small invertebrate and vertebrate fossils. Recovered specimens shall be prepared so that they can be identified and permanently preserved. • Specimens shall be identified, curated, and placed into a repository with permanent retrievable storage. • A report of findings, including an itemized inventory of recovered specimens, shall be prepared upon completion of the steps outlined above. The report shall include a discussion of the significance of all recovered specimens. The report and inventory, when submitted to the appropriate Lead Agency, would signify completion of the program to mitigate impacts to paleontologic resources.	
3.4 Geology/Soils		
The site has a potential for strong seismic ground shaking.	3.4-1. The geotechnical engineering recommendations of the report entitled "Geotechnical Engineering Report for Mountain View IV Wind Project", and attached as *Appendix D* of this EIR shall be consulted and implemented during project design and construction. 3.4-2. Permanent structures shall be designed by a professional engineer using, at a minimum, the latest seismic safety design standards outlined in the 2001 edition of the California Building Code for Seismic Zone 4.	Potential impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.
3.5 Public Health and Safety		
No significant impacts regarding public health and safety would occur; however, environmental commitments are integrated into the project.	3.5-1. The project is subject to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) for the protection of surface water quality. Conditions of approval for the project will require the implementation of NPDES	Potential impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

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	Best Management Practices (BMP) during construction 3.5-2. The project will implement the City's and BLM's safety setbacks (except at the internal boundary between Sections 27 and 28), and employ a modern turbine structurally designed to withstand large seismic events (magnitude 8.0), high winds (up to 130 mph), and flooding. 3.5-3. Prior to the issuance of grading permits, the project proponent shall secure all appropriate amendments to right-of-ways or corresponding instruments from the Southern California Gas Company. 3.5-4. Contract specifications shall require the grading contractor to contact the Southern California Gas Company prior to the issuance of grading permits to ensure that pipelines are properly located, and to coordinate and cooperate with SCG on-site inspectors during the associated construction phase. 3.5-5. If the facility exceeds the 1,320 gallons threshold for petroleum products, the operator shall be required to prepare and observe a Spill Prevention Control and Counter Measure plan, under the recently revised regulations pertaining to 40 CFR 112 of the Clean Water Act.	
3.6 Hydrology and Water Quality		
There is a potential for significant impacts to water quality.	3.6-1. Prior to issuance of grading permits, the project applicant would demonstrate compliance with all applicable regulations established by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as set forth in the NPDES permit requirements for urban runoff and storm water discharge and any regulations adopted by the City of Palm Springs pursuant to the NPDES regulations or requirements. Further, the applicant shall file an NOI with the RWQCB to obtain coverage under the	Potential impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.

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	NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity and shall implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) concurrent with the commencement of grading and construction activities. The SWPPP shall include both construction and post-construction pollution prevention and pollution control measures and shall identify funding mechanisms for post-construction control measures.	
The site is within the 100-year flood plain of the Whitewater River. The projected maximum flow depth in the portion of the Whitewater River containing the project site is approximately 1 foot during a 100-year storm flow.	3.6-2. Padmount transformers and wind turbine electronic and control systems that are not designed to operate under water must be at least two feet above the existing ground level in order to be safe from 100-year flood flows.	
3.7 Land Use		
No significant impacts on land use were identified.	No mitigation required.	Impacts are less than significant.
3.8 Noise		
Construction and Operational noise levels would be lower than the City's standard of 55dB since the nearest noise sensitive receptors are over 3000 feet from the project site.	3.8-1. The project will adhere to local noise ordinances during construction and project operation to keep noise levels lower than the City's 55dB noise criterion.	Potential impacts would be less than significant with mitigation incorporated.